

ANNEX 1

USAID/West Bank and Gaza
RFA No. 294-2007-007
Model Schools Network Program

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ANNEX 1 - Questions & Answers

- Q. 1:** The RFA states on page 6: “A set of criteria will be developed for the selection of participating schools.” Is it the intention of USAID that the applicant already have identified schools in the application, or only that criteria be proposed upon which the selection will be made following the award?
- A. 1:** Schools may be identified at the implementation plan stage following the award; At the application stage Applicants should propose clear selection criteria that will be used by the applicant at a later stage, and justify the rationale behind such criteria. This process should be conducive to accomplishing the overall objectives of the MSN program.
- Q. 2:** About what percentage of students in private schools are on scholarship or some sort of tuition aid?
- A.2:** It doesn't matter. The Model Schools Network Program will be working with private schools in the West Bank regardless of the percentage of students at these schools who receive scholarships or any other sort of tuition aid.
- Q.3:** Is there a legal policy of rights of access for students with disabilities in WB/G in public schools? Are there standards of accessibility that schools currently adhere to? Is there such a policy covering private schools?
- A. 3:** There is no comprehensive legal policy of rights of access for students with disabilities in WB/G in public schools. The Model Schools Network Program will target private schools only. USAID is not aware of the availability of such standards and policies for private schools.
- Q. 4:** What percentage of students currently enrolled in private schools have disabilities?
- A.4:** No accurate statistics are available on the percentage of students with disabilities at private schools.

Q.5: Page 6 of RFA in Program Description under Program Objectives states a four-year time span for the program, yet funding is stated for years 1, 2 and 3. How will Year 4 be funded?

A.5: The funding level for the Model Schools Network Program is \$9.2 million, pending availability of funds. The initial amount to be obligated in year 1 is \$2.3 million and the remaining mortgage will be added incrementally in years 2 and 3, again pending the availability of funds, which will cover program costs through the end of year 4.

Q.6: What is USAID policy beyond emergency government stage in Palestine?

A.6: The Model Schools Program will be implemented at private schools. USG policy currently permits coordination with the Palestinian Authority and the concerned PA Ministries.

Q.7: What is USAID policy in Gaza at this stage and its effect on implementation of MSN in Gaza?

A.7: The Model Schools Network Program (MSN) RFA has been amended to target only private schools in the West Bank. Gaza is no longer a targeted geographical area of the MSN RFA.

Q.8: Could we include students and teacher exchange to US part of our program activities?

A.8: The Model Schools Network Program is a model and in order for it to succeed and be easily replicated it must be developed and implemented locally. In addition, there are cost implications to the suggested approach that should be considered. However it is up to the applicants to propose innovative practical ideas that might work well under the program.

Q.9: Have USAID decided on targeted schools? RFA has mentioned one of the first tasks is to set up criteria on choosing the schools. Are we going to limit our school selection to those that requires less facilities upgrading e.g., computers, internet connectives? We need to have this date for our budgeting purpose.

A.9: The targeted 20 private schools should be from Ramallah, Bethlehem, East Jerusalem, Jericho and Hebron Governorates of the West Bank. However, it is not required under the RFA to submit a list with the names of schools, the list of schools will be submitted following the award and within the implementation plan. Any proposed construction/upgrading work and commodities' purchases submitted in the implementation plan should be linked to the implementation of the program goals; other construction/upgrading needs at the participating schools not related to achieving the goals are discouraged but would be considered on a case by case basis, with strong justification provided.

Q.10: Is this project covered under a SOAG? If so, we respectfully request a copy of the SOAG to know of its provisions as may be applicable to implementing partners.

A.10: There is no bilateral agreement with the Palestinian Authority, and consequently USAID/West Bank and Gaza does not have SOAGs.

Q.11: What assistance will be given by the Mission to assist implementing partners to establish their legal presence in-country (i.e., registration, accreditation) if required by the law of the cooperating country? Alternatively, will the host country counterpart to this project provide similar assistance?

A.11: Establishing legal presence in-country (i.e., Registration accreditation, tax status, etc.) is the applicants' sole responsibility.

Q.12: Would USAID consider changing the Authorized Geographic Code from 000 to another code such as 935 or 899?

A.12: The Authorized Geographic Code for the Model Schools Network Program is 000; however if there is a justified need, a waiver can be submitted for USAID's consideration.

Q.14: Pages 6 and 12 of the RFA refer to an initial funding amount in year 1 (\$2.3 mil.) and expected incremental funding for years 2 and 3. Since this is a four-year project, can we assume that incremental funding for year 4 is also expected?

A.14: The funding level for the Model Schools Network Program is \$9.2 million, pending availability of funds. The initial amount to be obligated in year 1 is \$2.3 million and the remaining mortgage will be added incrementally in years 2 and 3, again pending the availability of funds, which will cover program costs through the end of year 4.

Q.15: Does USAID still intend to make Gaza a focus region for program interventions in light of recent developments?

A.15: The Model Schools Network Program (MSN) RFA has been amended to target only private schools in the West Bank. Gaza is no longer a targeted geographical area of the MSN RFA.

Q.16: Does USAID expect a full-time presence in Gaza in light of recent developments?

A.16: The Model Schools Network Program (MSN) RFA has been amended to target only private schools in the West Bank. Gaza is no longer a targeted geographical area of the MSN RFA.

Q.17: As we read the RFA, you quote the statutory prohibition on working directly with the Palestinian Authority. Has anything changed given recent developments in terms of not being able to do business with the Authority in the West Bank?

- A.17. Contact with the Palestinian Authority is now permitted (see Annex 2 – Mission Notice No. 2007-WBG-18).
- Q.18. The RFA refers to construction activity (e.g., pages 18, 34). What types of construction activity is USAID seeking to be proposed?
- A.18. Any upgrading work under this program will be specific to the needs of each participating school. Any proposed upgrading/construction work should contribute to achieving the program's overall goals. Upgrading work at schools may include educational rooms, libraries, laboratories, computer labs, and indoor play facilities, to make the physical setting more appropriate for the successful application of other interventions. Other identified critical school upgrading needs may also be considered.
- Q.19. Pages 12, 13 and 17 refer to "key personnel" as the Chief of Party, Program Manager, Program Assistant Gaza, Procurement Support and Compliance Specialist, and Finance Officer. However, page 26 lists the "key personnel" as the Chief of Party, Program Manager, Gaza Program Coordinator, Education Advisor, and Finance Officer. Please clarify with respect to the different positions named.
- A.19. Key personnel positions under this program are the Chief of Party, Program Manager, Procurement Support and Compliance Specialist (PSCS), and Finance Officer. The Gaza Program Assistant position is no longer required as the Model Schools Network program will only be implemented in the West Bank. The Education Advisor position is also eliminated.
- Q.20. Please provide clarification on the suggested key personnel for Gaza. The RFA refers to a Program Assistant and later to a Program Coordinator. With the suggested level of experience, 5 years and an MA degree, is USAID looking for a more senior "Coordinator" vs. an Assistant?
- A.20. As the Model Schools Network program will be implemented in the West Bank only, the Gaza Program Assistant key position is no longer required.
- Q.21. Will schools within the model school network who are receiving new resources as part of a procurement package and/or administrator or teacher training need to sign the Anti-Terrorism Clause (ATC)?
- A.21. Yes, schools are required to sign the ATC. Rules on the applicability of the ATC are prescribed in accordance with section VI. Anti terrorism certification (ATC) under Mission Order No. 21.
- Q.22. Since the RFA was released, USAID has permitted PVOs to now contact and work with the Ministry of Education. Will this change the scope of the RFA?

- A.22. The scope of the RFA will not change as the MSN program will work only with private schools. USG policy currently permits contact with the Palestinian Authority and the concerned PA ministries.
- Q.23. Can USAID clarify this sentence on page 6: “The Model Schools Network (MSN) Program is a four-year program estimated at \$9.2 million. During the first year \$2.3 million will be obligated from the FY07 budget, with the remaining balance incrementally funded in years two and three of the life of the project...” Will the program be incrementally funded for years 2, 3 and 4, or is the program a 3 year program?
- A.23. The funding level for the Model Schools Network Program is \$9.2 million, pending availability of funds. The initial amount to be obligated in year 1 is \$2.3 million and the remaining mortgage will be added incrementally in years 2 and 3, again pending the availability of funds, which will cover program costs through the end of year 4.
- Q.24. Is the cost share that is expected 5% of the USAID funding level (\$9.2 million) or 5% of the total value of the program (USAID Funding + Cost Share = Total Value of Program)?
- A.24. The referenced Cost Share shall represent 5% (percent) of the total USAID funding level (\$9.2 million).
- Q.25. Does USAID have a general amount for procurement and limited construction they would like to see from the \$9.2 million?
- A.25. Applicants are free to suggest the combination of construction works, procurement of commodities or services that they see fit, as long as they can provide strong rationale for their approach that leads to a successful realization of program objectives.
- Q.26. The RFA on page 24 requests documents be submitted in Word and Excel 2000. Does the Mission have software that would be compliant with more recent versions of Word and Excel?
- A.26. Yes. Electronic copies may be submitted in Microsoft Word 2003 and Excel 2003 versions.
- Q. 27. If an applicant submits the required hard copy submissions by one of the methods set forth on pages 2 and 3 and pages 21 and 22 (i.e., by U.S Mail or delivery by DHL/FedEx/hand-carried), is it also required to submit its application electronically via Grants.gov?
- A.27 As stated in the RFA, “Applicants may upload applications to www.grants.gov; however, **hard copy submissions are still required**”. In other words, electronic submission through www.grants.gov is optional.